

REMARKS

This application has been reviewed in light of the Office Action dated September 25, 2003. Claims 1-8, 11-18, 20-29, and 31-53 are pending in this application, of which Claims 1, 2, 11, 12, 22, 23, 31, 36, 41, and 51-53 are in independent form. Claims 1, 2, 7, 11, 12, 17, 22-28, 31-34, 36-39, 41-44, 49, and 51-53 have been amended to define still more clearly what Applicant regards as his invention. Favorable reconsideration is requested.

Applicant gratefully acknowledges the indication that Claims 3, 13, 24, 32, 35, 37, 40, 42, and 45 include allowable subject matter and would be allowable if rewritten in proper independent form. Claims 3, 13, 24, 32, 35, 37, 40, 42, and 45 have not been so rewritten because, for the reasons given below, their base claims are believed to be allowable.

Claims 1, 2, 11, 12, 22, 23, 31, 36, 41, and 51-53 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph, as containing subject matter which was not described in the specification in such a way as to reasonably convey to one skilled in the art that the inventor, at the time the application was filed, had possession of the claimed invention. The Examiner asserted that the disclosure did not provide support for the feature of "a common printer driver module. . . ." Applicant has amended this recitation throughout the claims to --a common ~~printer driver~~ processing module . . .--, and submits that this rejection is accordingly now moot. Applicant submits that support in this specification for the features of amended Claim 1 can be found at least from page 18, line 4, to page 24, line 7. In particular, Applicant submits that the color characteristic conversion means 33 and halftoning means 34 (shown in Figure 1) are examples of implementations of the recited common processing module. In addition, modules 35-1 and 35-2 (shown in Figure 1) are examples of the plurality of individual processing

modules. (It is to be understood, of course, that the scope of the claims is not limited to the details of this or any other embodiment.)

Claims 1, 2, 11, 12, 22, 23, 31, 36, 41, and 51-53 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite, on the ground that it was unclear why the image processing apparatus would have a common printer driver module for processing image data for plural printers, and individual printer driver modules for processing image data for plural printers. To eliminate this as an issue, Applicant has amended these claims to recite that the image processing apparatus includes a common processing module for providing a common image processing for a printer connected to the information processing apparatus irrespective of the type of the connected printer and a plurality of individual processing modules each providing a different image processing for a printer connected to the information processing apparatus depending on the type of the connected printer. (Further discussion of the relation between the common and the individual processing modules is provided below.) Applicant believes that the rejection under Section 112, second paragraph, has been obviated, and its withdrawal is therefore respectfully requested.

Claims 1, 2, 5, 6, 11, 12, 15, 16, 21-23, 26, 27, 31, 36, 41, 46-49, and 51-53 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,228,118 (Sasaki), and Claims 4, 7, 8, 14, 17, 18, 20, 25, 28, 29, 33, 34, 38, 39, 43, 44, and 50 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Sasaki in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,907,666 (Yano et al.). Applicant respectfully traverses these rejections.

Applicant submits that amended independent Claims 1, 2, 11, 12, 22, 23, 31, 36, 41, and 51-53, together with the remaining claims dependent thereon, are patentably distinct from Sasaki at least for the following reasons.

The aspect of the present invention set forth in Claim 1 is an information processing apparatus that includes a common processing module for providing a common image processing for a printer connected to the information processing apparatus irrespective of the type of the connected printer. The apparatus also includes a plurality of individual processing modules each providing a different image processing for a printer connected to the information processing apparatus depending on the type of the connected printer, and a means for switching the plurality of individual processing modules in accordance with the type of the connected printer and outputting information processed by the switched module to the connected printer.

Among the notable features of Claim 1 are the use of one common processing module for image processing for printers, which processing is performed irrespective of what types those printers are, and the use of a plurality of individual processing modules each providing a different image processing for a printer, which latter processing does depend on the type of the respective printer. That is, the reason for providing both the common and the individual processing modules is to provide efficient and cost-effective processing.

Sasaki, as understood by Applicant, relates to a printing system in which one of the printer drivers through which print data is sent from a data processor to a printer is selected based on the interpreters available on the printer. Sasaki discusses a driver selection module and a printer driver for a print device. However, Applicant has not found anything in Sasaki that would teach or suggest using one common processing module for an image processing for printers, which processing is performed irrespective of the types of the printers, and in addition, using a plurality of individual processing modules each providing a different image processing for a printer, which processing does depend on the type of the printer, as recited in Claim 1. Accordingly, Applicant submits that, at least for this reason, Claim 1 is patentable over Sasaki.

Independent Claims 2, 11, 12, 22, 23, 31, 36, 41, and 51-53 include the same features of using one common processing module for an image processing for printers, which processing is performed irrespectively of the types of printers, and using a plurality of individual processing modules each providing a different image processing for a printer, which processing depends on the type of the printer, as discussed above in connection with Claim 1. Accordingly, Claims 2, 11, 12, 22, 23, 31, 36, 41, and 51-53 are believed to be patentable for at least the same reasons as discussed above in connection with Claim 1.

A review of the other art of record, including Yano et al., has failed to reveal anything that, in Applicant's opinion, would remedy the deficiencies of the art discussed above, as applied against the independent claims herein. Therefore, those claims are respectfully submitted to be patentable over the art of record.

The other rejected claims in this application depend from one or another of the independent claims discussed above, and, therefore, are submitted to be patentable for at least the same reasons. Since each dependent claim is also deemed to define an additional aspect of the invention, individual reconsideration of the patentability of each claim on its own merits is respectfully requested.

This Amendment After Final Action is believed to place this application in condition for allowance and, therefore, its entry is believed proper under 37 C.F.R. § 1.116. Accordingly, entry of this Amendment After Final Action, as an earnest effort to advance prosecution and reduce the number of issues, is respectfully requested. Should the Examiner believe that issues remain outstanding, it is respectfully requested that the Examiner contact Applicant's undersigned attorney in an effort to resolve such issues and advance the case to issue.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicant respectfully requests favorable reconsideration and early passage to issue of the present application.

Applicant's undersigned attorney may be reached in our New York Office by telephone at (212) 218-2100. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our address listed below.

Respectfully submitted,


Attorney for Applicant

Registration No. 7,290

FITZPATRICK, CELLA, HARPER & SCINTO
30 Rockefeller Plaza
New York, New York 10112-3801
Facsimile: (212) 218-2200

NY_MAIN 380996v1